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Un Cas de Dégénérescence psychique héréditaire. Par Dr. JAKOWLEW. L'Encephale, 1887, No. 2.

The term "hereditary psychic degeneration" is proposed as the designation of a new nosologic group. Next to heredity, neurasthenia is the cause of most psycho-neuroses. The many phobias, which since Kowalewsky's work in 1885 are generally thought to be at bottom identical and named pathophobia, are among the most common indications of hereditary taint. The case, which is described at length, is of a prompter in a theatre aged thirty-six, and is of great interest and carefully studied, including compass and electrical measurements. The conclusions drawn by the author are that pathophobia, a sense of being possessed, and impulsive actions are products of the same conditions, and are attended by terror; that the patient is fully aware of the absurdity of his ideas (which circumstance distinguishes these cases from similar phenomena in cases of primary insanity), and that all these phenomena are connected with nervous weakness.

Des Intervalles Lucides, considérés dans leur rapports avec la capacité civile des aliénés. E. RÉGIS. L'Encephale, No. 2, 1887.

The unsatisfactory nature of present French legislation on the relations between crime and insanity has been recently pointed out in an interesting series of articles in *Le Progrès Médical* for the current year, by the magistrate, A. Martin, in *L'Encephale* and elsewhere. One of the most vital points for the safety of society, as is well known, is the conception of lucid intervals, of which Dr. Régis distinguishes three kinds—remission or attenuation of the more marked symptoms, complete momentary suspension of symptoms, and intermission or a complete return to the normal state between two attacks. The distinction between remission and intermission is especially insisted on. Both as to the nature and duration of the intervals French law is inferior to that of ancient Rome. A permanent departmental commission should consist of a doctor and an officially subordinate administrator to minimize the present difficulties.

Diseases of the Nervous System. Vol. V of A System of Practical Medicine by American Authors. Edited by William Pepper, M. D., LL. D., assisted by Louis Starr, M. D. Philadelphia: Lea Bros, 1886. pp. 1317.

This large volume is made up of contributions from twenty-three eminent American practitioners, including Drs. Robert Edes, C. K. Mills, Weir Mitchell, J. J. Putnam, E. C. Seguin, E. C. Spitzka, Allen Starr, and H. C. Wood, and contains nearly sixty diagrams. The articles on general semiology, localization, mental diseases, hysteria, hystero-epilepsy, catalepsy, ecstasy, and disorders of speech are of especial value for students of psycho-physics. These topics, as well as many others treated in this volume, have now come to be represented by so voluminous a French or German literature, that even special students in the neurological field are bewildered in seeking a serviceable knowledge on these themes in continental publications or clinics. Such guidance this book is intended to afford. To specialists, as well as to the general practitioner, this volume is far the best in this field in English. That there should be repetitions, as well as great inequalities of merit in the different

parts, is not surprising on the plan adopted. It is greatly to be hoped that such a book may help to improve the quality and increase the amount of instruction given upon these topics in our medical schools. That but seven pages, and those not abreast of our present knowledge, are given to disorders of speech, and that nothing is said of hypnotism save very incidentally in the chapters of Dr. C. K. Mills on hystero-epilepsy and ecstasy, are defects, the one in the execution and the other in the plan of this volume, which we shall hope to see remedied in a second edition. Few chapters will be of greater value and interest to psychologists than that on Mental Diseases by Dr. C. F. Folsom, one of the most distinguished specialists in New England, and which is reprinted by itself.

Mouvement de l'Aliénation Mentale à Paris, from 1872 to 1885. A. PLANÈS. *Annales Médico-psychologiques*, January and March, 1887.

These statistics show a gradual increase of insanity, in proportion to the population, as measured by entrance to institutions. More men than women are afflicted, and most attacks are in June, and least in February and September. The most rapid decrease is from the middle of August to the middle of September, and the most rapid increase is from the middle of February to March and from the middle of April to May. From September to October considerable increase occurs, followed by a no less considerable fall to November. We cannot follow here the nine different forms of mental alienation for each sex which are clearly presented and suggestive.

Alternation of Neuroses. G. H. SAVAGE. *Journal of Mental Science*, January, 1887.

Not only do different forms of nervous disorders appear in different members of the same family, but epilepsy, insanity, depravity, idiocy, and somnambulism may be represented in the children of the same parents. Headache often alternates with insanity. Hysteria alternates with various neuroses; epilepsy, even asthma, disappears on an outbreak of insanity. Rheumatic fever and insanity are often associated alternately, and many functional troubles are relieved by bodily disease, on the principle designated in a late German essay as "kinetic equivalence."

A Manual of Diseases of the Nervous System. W. R. GOWERS. London, 1886.

The introductory chapter to these two volumes distinguishes four pathological classes of disease. 1, Coarse organic diseases, such as hemorrhage, softening tissue, etc.; 2, structural disease; 3, nutritional disease, chorea, and general paralysis, which latter the author judges so without structural pathology as to belong in neither the first nor second class. The chapters on general symptoms and on electrical excitability of nerves and muscles follow. Part first is devoted to diseases of nerves. In the section on neuritis and morbid growths, sciatica, to which an entire chapter is given, is called not a neuralgia but a neuritis. Of the five classes of multiple neuritis, the tabetic form only is provisional, and its relation to chronic alcoholism is undoubted.